

AMERICORPS WATERSHED STEWARDS PROJECT

# TRIBUTARY TRIBUNE

VOLUME 16, ISSUE 3



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### **TEAM LEADER BIO: CARYN BEITER EDUCATION TEAM LEADER HOMETOWN: ROCHESTER, NY**

After graduating with a B.S. in Marine and Freshwater Biology from the University of New Hampshire, Caryn accepted a position with a small computer company (!) to pay the bills. After 2 years, she happily moved on as a marine science instructor position with a camp in the Florida Keys. From there, she has learned, worked, taught, lived and traveled around the country, investigating tidepools, bays, estuaries and endangered forests throughout northern and southern California. For two years she worked as an interpretive and education park ranger at Acadia NP on the rugged shores of Maine. During her first months in the Arcata area she was a picker of tomatoes, turnips, rutabagas, brussel sprouts and cabbages in Willow Creek, an experience that yielded many new perspectives. She has thoroughly enjoyed the return to the aquatic environment through her two years with the WSP.

What's next for Caryn? "I want to travel, settle down, get a dog or two, maybe go back to school, hablar fluidamente en espanol, learn to play the guitar, and find a position teaching science that doesn't have an end date!"

#### *Cover photo information:*

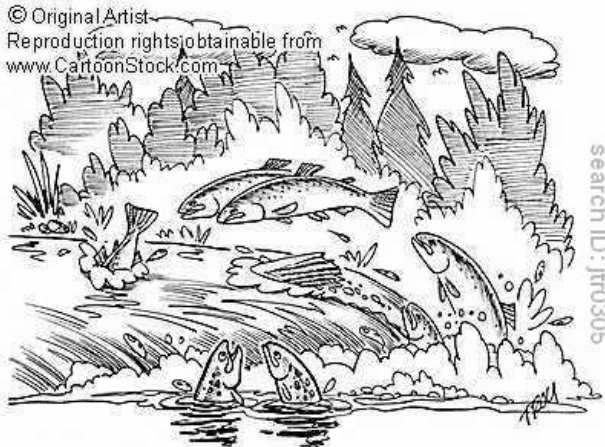
Susan Pienta submitted this photo of a Perch Creek prescribed burn that occurred in April of 2010. Check out Susan's poem "The Lorax of Orleans" on pages 6 and 7 which provides a humorous yet poignant reflection on prescribed burns in salmon country.



## Population Dives

Chinook and Steelhead swim  
strong in crystal green pools.  
I need a wetsuit to see them.

Knuckles bleed  
while wrestling with  
the neoprene



"Wow, look at those chinooks spawning! You'd think it was a matter of life and death!"

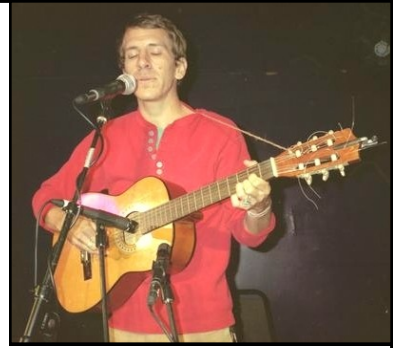
*By Mandy Monroe, shown below at camp geared up for a quick snack on the grill before diving into the South Fork of the Trinity River. Mandy is a first year member with the Trinity County Resource Conservation District.*



## Braid

I fell in at the  
braid in the river

Where doing  
does  
and language  
sloughs  
Where the brain  
forgot what the body knows  
I fell in at the braid in the river



Where danced a woman with a feather in her  
mouth  
Grinning at the center of her swirling eddy's  
blouse  
When I fell in at the braid in the river

I saw her sister on shore shut her eyes like  
doors  
To something like the sun the resembles what  
she swore  
When I passed by through the braid in the  
river

Catching everything in sight like willows on  
the bar  
Name all I saw like no one had come before  
A fisher at the falls or elk made small  
By the size of the lick across highway 96

Moon's midnight will turn the water to tar  
Marriage of mountain and sky, you are who  
you are

But, sisters, I'll be one more the brother  
of any kin resembling our temporal mother

*By Brandon Basino, a first year member with  
the Mid-Klamath Watershed Council*





# The **Variability** of **SWILLUP CREEK**

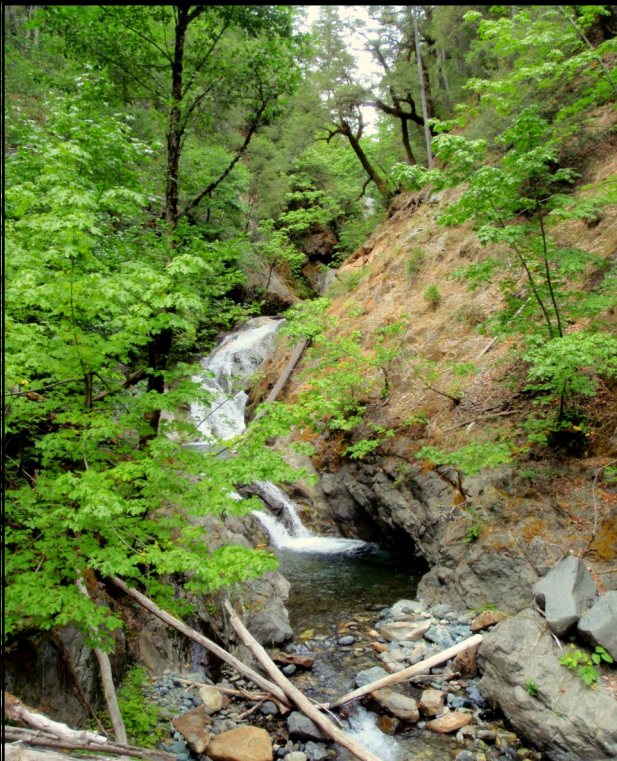
By

Xana Hermosillo, a first year member with the USFS in Happy Camp

Sucky Swillup? Sad Swillup? Scary Swillup? When we are habitat typing a creek in Happy Camp, we find ourselves adding adjectives to the name. They usually all depend on the day and our mood. One day I was reaching for some of our equipment when I looked up and saw a rattle snake with nine rings coiled and ready to strike. Scary Swillup. Most days when walking further and further up the creek to our new starting point, our feet and legs would constantly fall out from under us. Swillup has flooded many times and the rocks are anything but stable. Sucky Swillup. A squirrel seemed to have had bad luck on Swillup, too. I found it dead, face down in a pool, possibly hit on the head by a rock. Sad Swillup.

Habitat typing can be grueling at times. As you are slowly moving up the creek trying to collect data on salmonid habitat, you are doing the same tasks over and over, scaling boulders,

going under and over logs, and bushwhacking straight up hills to get out of the creek. For Swillup Creek, we were supposed to start at the mouth and stop three miles up the creek. However, as our progress seemed to slow with each day, after three weeks of work, our boss moved our end point to 2.5 miles. As fate would have it, when we reached the tributary end point, we were surrounded by waterfalls. The tributary came down 20-30 meters above us between bedrock plunging into a pool and then spilling out as a waterfall into the next pool and so on. We then looked up Swillup Creek and found the same scene! Waterfall sheets falling into deep pools. We finally found the creek's true name: Surprising Swillup.



*Above, a glimpse of the lower half of the Swillup Creek waterfall sheets.*

*Below, Xana and Lisa Byers stand in the "LAX Creek," a tributary of Swillup Creek.*



## We are the River



This is a song conceived at an Oregon women's peyote circle during the early infancy of the Women's Liberation Movement. Then, the river was a metaphor for women. Now, close to 40 years later, the river includes all of us who work to attain wholeness, sanity and health for our precious mother earth. I sang it to fellow WSPers at Year 15's Spring Training Talent Show in Petrolia. If you want to hear it, come to Weaverville and I'll sing it for you. But for now, enjoy it as rhythmic poetry.

We are the river.  
We're gonna wash your levees down.  
We're comin through the mountains.  
We're movin through your towns.  
We're gonna join with the other rivers  
and then we'll have a chance  
cause no dam the man can build will stand  
when the sea begins to dance,  
when the sea begins to dance.

Maple buds are red now.  
Small streams are trickling down.  
The river's runnin swollen.  
The water's on the rise in town.  
We'll have no more of your reservoirs  
They keep us from bein free.  
You know that flood time is near my friends  
And we're almost to the sea  
Yes we're almost to the sea.

Fishes swimmin with us,  
we're gonna help them on their way.  
Greedy corporations  
took their habitat away.  
From the depths up to the surface  
few fishes can be found,  
But the water knows where the water flows  
when the river's underground  
when the river's underground  
when the river's underground.



"We are the River" submitted by Bo Kimball. Bo is a second-year WSP member serving with the Trinity County Resource Conservation District.

**The Lorax of Orleans**  
By  
**Dr. Seuss and Susan "Seussal" Pienta**

At the far end of Humboldt where Port-Orford  
Cedar still grows,  
and the wind smells sweet and sour (and for  
part of the year, wet and moldy) when it blows  
is the home of the Mid Klamath Watershed  
Council.

What is this council?  
And why is it there  
at the far edge of the middle of nowhere?  
Mr. Will Harling still lives there  
ask him, he knows.

You won't see Mr. Harling  
Don't look in the store.  
He hides in his office  
behind a curtain made from an old closet door.  
And he talks on the phone and lingers 'til  
nightfall  
often alone.  
On certain weekdays in August  
he peeks (around the corner)  
and sometimes he speaks.  
He tells of the council and how it began.  
He'll tell you perhaps....  
if you bring him some jam.

I'll tell you he says with a smile that looks  
young and new  
The story of MKWC and the good that we do.

It all started back, such a long, long time back.  
Way back in the days of 2001  
When the rivers were wet  
And we had the same sun.  
One morning, a smile lit up my face  
And I had the idea  
To protect this sweet place

In the mighty Klamath  
I often caught a gleam  
Of the anadromous fish  
Traveling upstream

Oh this place, this place!  
This magical place  
All my life, I've thrived in this space  
It has mountain peaks

Often covered in snow  
And the rush of the river  
So wild, this flow

I felt a great leaping  
of joy in my heart.  
With Luna and Nancy  
We could finally start.

In no time at all, the Orleans FireSafe Council  
was born  
Then I burned some young fir while collecting  
acorn

And with great skillful skill and with great  
speedy speed,  
We burned a whole acre, it was free to re-seed.  
The instant I'd finished, I heard a *ga-Zump!*  
I looked.

I saw something pop out of the ash  
of the tree I'd burned down. It was sort of a  
man.  
Describe him?... That's hard. I don't know if I  
can.

He was tallish. And oldish.  
And greenish. And mossy.  
And he spoke with a voice  
that was pleasant, yet bossy.  
"Mister!" he said with a wonderful wheeze,  
"I am the Lorax. I speak for the trees.  
I speak for the trees, for the trees have no  
tongues.  
And I'm asking you, sir, at the top of my  
lungs"-  
he was very upset as he shouted and cursed-  
"*What have you done to my baby Doug Firs?*"  
"Look, Lorax," I said. "There's no cause for  
alarm.

I burned just one acre. I am doing no harm.  
I'm being quite useful. Like applying a salve.  
Fires are something that most forests have!  
They open up cones so new trees can grow  
They recycle the nutrients so life can still flow  
Fire opens up space and lets in the sun  
Now oaks and madrones can grow and have  
fun!



The Lorax said,  
"Sir! You just might be right  
But I'm starting to think  
you need a much bigger fight!"

And at that very moment, he leapt to his feet  
He grabbed my hand, pulled me off of my seat  
And he showed me the dams, and the toxic algae  
He showed me how much better this place  
could still be.

I looked at the Lorax and gave a sad sigh  
"It seems such work, how can I try? "

The Lorax said nothing.  
Just gave me a smile  
Just gave me a small, hopeful smile  
And I'll never forget that sly look in his eye  
As he heisted himself and flew for a mile  
Up in the trees.  
He then left for the sky.

And all that the Lorax left here in a world  
of crazy environmental laws  
was a small pile of rocks, with one word...  
"Because."  
Whatever *that* meant, well, I just couldn't  
guess.

That was long, long ago.  
But each day since that day  
I've sat here still working  
kept working each day.

Through the years, while my buildings  
Have gotten repairs  
I've kept working  
wondering if anyone cares.  
"But *now*," says Will Harling,  
"Now that *you're* here,  
the word of the Lorax seems perfectly clear.  
BECAUSE someone like you  
cares a whole awful lot,  
things will get better.  
Things will start to improve.  
"SO...  
Fight!" calls Will Harling.  
He flexes his bicep.  
"You have to come join me  
We'll take the next step!

You'll help me protect the cold water here  
And for lots of cold water, all salmon cheer.  
Plant some more willow. Pull noxious weed.  
Grow a forest. Let the fire come feed.  
Submit a grant. Send it to RAC.

Then the coho  
And all of the salmon  
May come back!

Susan is a first-year WSP member serving  
with the Mid-Klamath Watershed Council.  
She modeled one of her characters after her  
WSP placement site mentor, Will Harling.

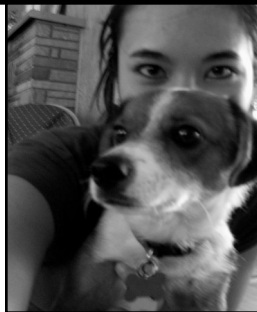
Will is the Executive Director of the Mid  
Klamath Watershed Council (MKWC) in  
Orleans, Ca. MKWC, in conjunction with the  
Orleans Fire Safe Council, formed in 2001.  
Since it's humble beginnings in a dilapidated  
trailer, the non-profit organization has grown,  
providing jobs and community space to a very  
rural community.

MKWC services the Mid Klamath subbasin,  
the area between the confluence of the Trinity  
River and Iron Gate Dam. The work the  
watershed council encompasses a wide range  
of restoration projects, from fisheries work and  
watershed education to upslope projects  
including fire and fuels work and invasive  
weed removal. To see the full scope of  
MKWC's work, check out [www.mkwc.org](http://www.mkwc.org).

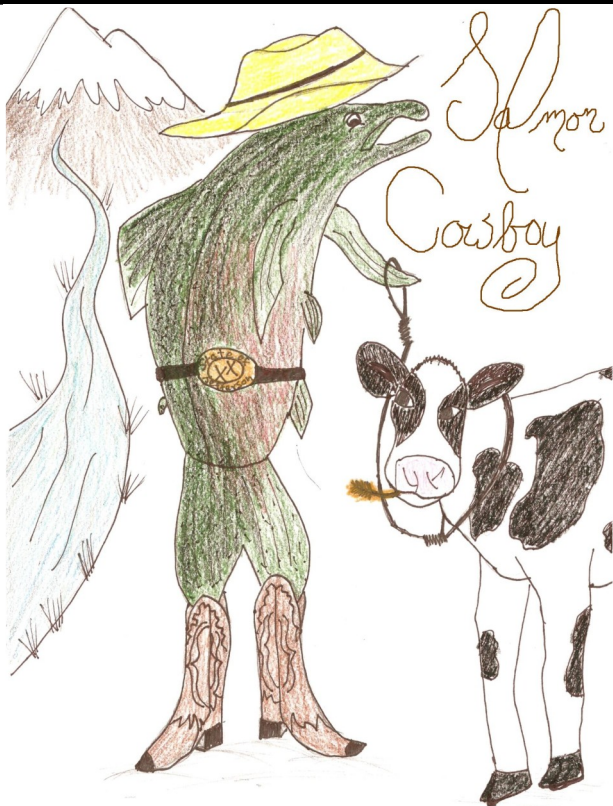
Below, Susan, on right, works with Will, on  
left,  
during her  
Individual  
Service  
Project  
restora-  
tion tour  
in  
August.







Meiling Roddam, the talented illustrator of *Salmon Cowboy*, is a first-year WSP member serving with the DFG in Yreka. She is shown above with her dog Sawyer.



The above fish print collage was submitted by Rusty White. Rusty is a second year member with the USFS in Orleans and is apparently another talented WSP artist.



# Feelin' Happy at Happy Camp!



A busy day for volunteer Matt Odom! There's nothing like a little stream flow monitoring sandwiched between paddling the Klamath River and an adventure hike to Ukonom Falls.



Craig Reese, a Green Futures participant, shows off his Habityping skills for the Happy Camp ladies.

Photos taken by Alan Crockett and submitted by Tara Dettmar.  
Tara is a first year member with the USFS in Happy Camp.

## Bullfrogs on the Salmon River

The Salmon River watershed is home to seven species of frogs and toads: the tailed frog, the western toad, the Pacific tree frog, the red-legged frog, the Cascades frog, the foothills yellow-legged frog, and the bullfrog. These seven species of frogs all utilize riverine and wetland habitats as breeding grounds and for general habitat. Of these seven species of frog, six are native to the Salmon River and its watershed. The one exception is the bullfrog.

Bullfrogs are native to the United States east of the Rocky Mountains. They have been introduced both intentionally as a human food source and as pest control, and accidentally as fish stockings in California and other western states. Due to their adaptability, size, mobility and voracious appetite they are strong competitors against native species. A bullfrog will literally consume anything that it can fit into its mouth, including arthropods, fishes, other frogs and toads, reptiles, birds, and mammals. As a result, the invasion of the bullfrog is a serious threat to the biodiversity of the Salmon River and its tributaries.

Research has shown that as the abundance of bullfrogs increases, the number of the

federally threatened red-legged frogs decreases. This poses a serious threat to the survival of red-legged frogs wherever they are found in cohabitation with the non-native bullfrog. Not only do the two species use the same habitats, but red-legged frogs are also smaller, allowing the bullfrogs to out-compete them for limited resources. Furthermore, bullfrogs have been known to consume male red-legged frogs that are searching for a mate.



Frogs and toads create pleasant sounds. If bullfrogs are not kept out of Salmon River country, those sounds may no longer be a signal that spring has sprung. Next time, as you walk or drive through Salmon River country, try to notice the sounds of the native frogs and toads, and then imagine a landscape silent save for the burping bullfrog.

*By Bill House, a first year WSP member serving with the Salmon River Restoration Council.*



A Yurok Tribe Environmental Program (YTEP) employee, on his way into the kitchen for a cup of coffee, got an unexpected surprise. Not only was all the coffee gone, but it had been eaten by our new friend from the forest! Although the bear was chased off more than once with loud noises and mace, he can still be seen nonchalantly sniffing around the back door in search of his morning fix.

Photo sent in by Dan Riddle, a second-year member serving with YTEP.



On October 16, WSP Northern region members traveled to Weaverville to help out at the Trinity Fish Fair. On right, Susan Pienta and Mandy Monroe network with the Weaverville public.



On left, Jessica Frisk sells pumpkins to bright-eyed youngsters. She traveled from the Central region to assist her Northern region contemporaries.

On right, Brandon Basino demonstrates how to press apples into cider. Honeycrisp, anyone?



Below, Tara Dettmar practices her face painting techniques. Inside every WSP member is an inspired artist.



Thanks everyone for all your hard work and dedication!

# *Off the Beaten Path*

*By Michael Kein*

The loss of meandering and braided channels within the Salmon River has been one of the greatest contributors to the decline of salmonids within the river system. Due in part to large mining operations within the watershed beginning in 1851 and running through the early 1900 's, the river channels have been greatly altered. Water tends to run more swiftly through the river channel compared to historical estimates. Sadly, this is not good for fish, amphibians, birds, and the like. Due to this process, the channel has gotten quite deep in many areas and has lost much of its complexity. These straighter and quicker flows are inclined to work against the production of slow water riparian habitats. And without question, with the lack of these features, fish fair far less well.

These off-channel habitats are critical points of refuge for all salmonid species. Since both Spring run and Fall run Chinook spawn in the late and early fall, their offsprings ' appearance in the gravel beds comes during higher flows. This is also true for Coho which spawn during the winter. As small alevins and fry, these fish need as much help as they can get. This assistance comes in the form of

cover and slower moving waters.

Some natural contributions that occur in a river system that aid to these types of safe heavens for fish may include the congregation of large woody debris within the stream channel or off to one side. These barriers slow water and collects other materials which give fish and animals places to hide. Furthermore, other insects tend to congregate on top and underneath this woody formation, increasing the amount of food available for the juveniles. The collection of large woody debris (LWD) can lead to sediment build up which in turn allows for the growth of willows and other riparian vegetation.

You may ask, "What is being done about this problem?" The answer is very simple... plenty. To increase the amount of habitat available to juvenile fish, the Salmon River Restoration Council (SRRC) is using a multiple pronged attack. To begin, the SRRC is attempting to slow the amount of human-deposited sediments in to the river which can drastically change the hydrology of the river and affect habitat connectivity.



These sediments can cover redds within the river and fill existing habitat that is present within the system. For years, the Restoration Council has worked with agencies and private land owners alike to slow the amount of sediment run-off from private and public roads.

It has been estimated that thanks to programs such as the Sediment Source Assessment, 47 miles of roads have been decommissioned and more than 50 miles of storm-proofing has occurred on the Upper and Lower South Fork road systems.

However, roads can do more than just add sediment to the river. Roads can also cause fish barriers. Again, the SRRC has been working tirelessly to evaluate possible barriers and to work with county and federal crews to have them removed. The latest example of this is the Whites Gulch culvert. This past fall, Siskiyou County crews removed an 8 foot culvert and replaced with a bridge, allowing for easy fish passage to the habitat above. Another recent example was the removal of a culvert at Kelley Gulch in 2006. This site has also been designated a site for riparian restoration due to its need for riparian cover and past degradation. Finally, as an ongoing project, Hotelling Creek has been identified as a site for barrier removal and the project continues to move forward.

Finally, the SRRC has recently completed the second phase of its Riparian Assessment Project which identifies possible areas for the replanting of riparian vegetation. Using stream profiles, SRRC staff are designing plans to have high priority sites replanted with several different native plant species.

Proposals are also in the works with the Watershed Education Program to have two of these sites be replanted with the help of Forks of Salmon and Junction Schools. With the help of the students and the community, these sites could potentially provide refuge and habitat for juvenile and adults salmonids.

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***“Roads can do more than just add sediment to the river. Roads can also cause fish barriers.”***

Overall, the Salmon River is in need of restoration to improve the salmonid habitat. It has been a mission of the SRRC for many years to help provide assistance to mother nature in respect to habitat restoration. In the coming year we hope to continue this effort with the help of the community and friends of the Salmon River.

*Michael Kein is a second year member with the Salmon River Restoration Council. To get more information about the SRRC, check them out on the web at [www.srrc.org](http://www.srrc.org).*

## My Wonderful Wetsuit

I begin and end my survey days the same: panting and exhausted.

My wet suit is slightly too small. I expend a vast amount of energy and almost all my patience coaxing the thick, unforgiving neoprene over my thighs. Squirming and grunting, I pray I don't topple over. The ever growing hole in the seat of my suit threatens to make me lose my cool. And the thought of prying it off at the end of a long day borders unbearable. I start wishing the stupid salmon would just count themselves! After I catch my breath and calm down, I throw on my felt boots, gloves, snorkel and begin invading the personal space of salmonids.

Adult Chinook and steelhead seem impossibly big. When the first Chinook charges through a bubble curtain, my mind stops. Gawking like an idiot, astounded by this colossal thing I forget to count and suck water in through my snorkel, simultaneously filling with childlike joy and amazement. I swim with giants.

My hostility towards my wetsuit fades. For without it I'd be in my dry suit (don't even get me started on that prison) or freezing my buns off in my bikini. Or much worse than all of those, not in the river at all! Gratitude toward my suit grows with each brief, fishy encounter. Dare I say, I even start to love it. Especially the super snazzy, thick, yellow racing stripes on both sides of the suit. An added flare I thoroughly enjoy. I forget the struggles of the morning and snorkel happily along.

Dragging myself back on land at the end of the day I am faced with the arduous task of removing my wet suit. Which, I hate to admit often takes an extra set of hands. Thanks Rusty! Removing it solo pushes me to the edge of mental and physical collapse. Defeat seems imminent. I will simply live in this suit forever. But with my last ounce of strength I make the final pull and free my feet from its steel jaws.

I am again left panting and exhausted. But excited for the next time I'm nose to nose with a Chinook!

*Haley Carlson is a first year WSP member serving at the USFS in Orleans.*

## Yreka Haiku Series

Siskiyou County  
Department of Fish and Game  
Yreka, C.A.

Kids educated  
Six lessons in their classroom  
Silvery salmon

Strewn across Nor Cal  
We are watershed stewards  
Love oncorhynchus

Egg, alevin, and fry  
Smolt, adult, spawner till death  
Salmon life cycle

Marlahan mustard  
Armenian blackberry  
Invasive species

Anadromous fish  
Lives in rivers or ocean?  
Why, in both, of course!

Nelson Ranch planting  
On September 25<sup>th</sup>  
A service project

*Kristen Gangl is a first year member with the Department of Fish and Game in Yreka. She is on the left planting trees with her field partner Meiling during their Individual Service Project.*







As Service Year 17 begins, I would like to welcome all of the incoming members to the WSP and thank you in advance for dedicating the next year of your life to our

communities, to our watersheds, and to the fish! A very full and exciting year lies ahead of us, and we all look forward to many accomplishments over the course of this term.

I also offer a warm welcome to the WSP's five new or returning placement sites:

CCC/Eel River Watershed Improvement Group (Fortuna)  
Coastal Restoration Planning and Assessment Program (Fortuna)  
Farallones Marine Sanctuary Association (San Francisco)  
San Mateo Resource Conservation District (Half Moon Bay)  
Santa Cruz Resource Conservation District (Capitola)  
San Luis Obispo County Steelhead Initiative (CCC Los Padres, Morro Bay National Estuary Program, Central Coast Salmon Enhancement, Land Conservancy of San Luis Obispo)

To conclude Service Year 16, I recognize the work of everyone whose hands have helped build the WSP. First, to the members who have amassed hours on the streets and in the field: your dedication to national service, to your communities, and to those around you exemplifies stewardship for all to mirror. To the WSP's Team Leaders (Caryn, Caterina and Amanda) who coordinate the education, outreach, and volunteer/media components of our project: the staff appreciate your programmatic support and traditional members appreciate the depth of experience provided by your hard work. To the placement site supervisors, mentors, and co-mentors, who in addition to their already busy schedules shouldered the added responsibility of training

the next generation of natural resource professionals; you are the foundation that houses the stewardship which emerges from WSP generated knowledge. To the WSP staff (Sonja, Sarah, and Kristin), thank you for your endless dedication. Running a smooth program in the midst of continual change requires advanced planning and troubleshooting, for which the entire WSP team is eternally grateful! Finally, to the CCC and especially to Michelle Rankin, thank you for all of the support and guidance you continue to provide for this wonderful program!

I look forward to another three years of "getting things done for America"!

Warmest regards,  
Carrie

I sit back and look at the road I have traveled within the WSP sphere and I am astonished at how each day has provided an amazing opportunity for growth, especially when I have least expected it. I am honored to be a part of a program that is simultaneously wrapping up its 16<sup>th</sup> year in existence while embarking on its 17<sup>th</sup>. It is the members of the program and the communities we serve that inspire, enlighten and humble me. I look to the Year 16 members with their strength and ability to persevere and the Year 17 members with their fresh idealism and vitality and realize that a term of service with WSP can provide a profound gestational period. I want to thank the members who will carry their legacy into the future and welcome those who are about to embark on an incredible journey!

Sincerely,  
Sonja



## WELCOME YEAR 17 TEAM LEADERS!

Erika!  
Outreach Team Leader

Spence!  
Volunteer/Media Team  
Leader

Stephanie!  
Education Team Leader



My name is: Erika Stowe-Madison and I am the Outreach Team Leader for YR. 17. I am originally from the Ojai Valley-located in SUNNY Southern California, in between Santa Barbara and Ventura. I moved to Humboldt County at the ripe age of 17 to attend college at Humboldt State University-there I studied an array of subjects ranging from Botany to Arabic, but eventually settled on Political Science as my major-focusing on Environmental Policy. Since graduating in 2008, I have spent my time traveling the globe, surfing, hiking, cycling, and climbing-as these activities tend to assist me in discovering new places. In addition, I have spent time writing a column for my local newspaper, working as an energy efficiency intern, and working as an AmeriCorps Vista for the California Conservation Corps. As I embark on another term with the CCC and WSP I am looking forward to learning about the nuances of the fisheries realm as well as engaging the community in our program.

Ryan Spencer is the Year 17 Volunteer Media Team Leader. He has been very busy embarking on a few major life changing events, new job, new house and most exciting new wife. Ryan was married less than 2 weeks after Orientation and has worked very hard to get into the groove of his new position with WSP.

Hello! My name is Stephanie Brindle. I am the YR 17 Education Team Leader. I am originally from the lovely state of Iowa but have been living in California for over five years. I came to Humboldt County three years ago by way of Santa Cruz to attend graduate school at Humboldt State University. I am looking forward to a great education season. I am very excited to work with the WSP AmeriCorps members and schools to share love and knowledge of our watersheds with local students.

